

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 SCCT-01 OMB-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /070 W

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R 051318Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3269

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USUN NEW YORK 1032

S E C R E T JIDDA 0062

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, US

SUBJECT: SAUDI FONMIN SAUD COMMENTS ON FORTHCOMING
MEETING OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL

SUMMARY: SAUDI FONMIN PRINCE SAUD TOLD CHARGE JAN 3
THAT SAG AND OTHER ARAB STATES WERE PLEASED WE HAD NOT
VETOED PLO ATTENDANCE AT SECURITY COUNCIL'S JANUARY
MEETING. HE DID NOT THINK THOUGH THAT PLO WOULD MOVE
TOWARD ALIGNING ITS POSITION ON ISRAEL WITH THAT OF
OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS. INSTEAD, IT WAS ISRAEL
THAT SHOULD SHOW FLEXIBILITY AND MOVEMENT. SAUD
BELIEVED SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE MIGHT CAUSE
PALESTINIAN QUESTION TO BE INCREASINGLY DEFINED
IN TERMS OF A POLITICAL NATIONALITY. CHARGE URGED
THAT ARAB STATES AND PLO NOT REPEAT TACTICAL MIS-
TAKES OF PAST BY INSISTING ON WHAT THEY BELIEVED WAS
THEIR ENTIRE RIGHT RATHER THAN IN SEEKING WHAT WAS
POSSIBLE. IT WOULD BE TOO BAD, HE SAID, IF SECURITY

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COUNCIL DEBATE SHOULD CHECK POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

EVIDENT TODAY FOR THE APPEARANCE OF A VICTORY
FOR PALESTINIANS IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING CHARGE'S CALL ON FONMIN PRINCE SAUD AL-FAISAL JAN 3, PRINCE NOTED ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE ATHERTON HAD VISITED SAUDI ARABIA WHILE PRINCE WAS ABROAD ON VACATION. PRINCE SAUD UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER, THAT MR. ATHERTON HAD BEEN ABLE TO REVIEW WITH SAUDI LEADERS MANY TOPICS RANGING FROM MILITARY MATTERS, TO BILATERAL ECONOMIC ISSUES, AND THE FORTHCOMING MEETING OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL.

2. CHARGE SAID THAT MR. ATHERTON'S MEETINGS HAD BEEN PROLONGED WITH SAUDI LEADERS AND THAT THEY HAD BEEN FRANK AND BENEFICIAL. ON THE MATTER OF THE US SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING, AS HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS KNEW, WE BELIEVED IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE COUNCIL'S DEBATE NOT UNSETTLE PREVIOUS UN RESOLUTIONS THAT HAVE THE CONCURRENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND UPON WHOSE BASES FURTHER PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST MUST PROCEED. WE HAD SHOWN OUR WILLINGNESS TO APPROACH THE MIDDLE EASTERN PROBLEM IN A POSITIVE SPIRIT AND HAD NOT BLOCKED THE ATTENDANCE OF THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO) AT UN SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE. WE THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAT ALL PARTIES TO THE DEBATE ADDRESS THEMSELVES REALISTICALLY TO THE ISSUES. IT WOULD BE TOO BAD IF SPEAKERS--IN EFFORTS TO OUTSTRIP EACH OTHER--SHOULD CREATE FURTHER OBSTACLES TO PROGRESS ON THE PALESTINE QUESTION. IT WAS IMPORTANT ALSO FOR THE PLO TO DEMONSTRATE A POSITIVE AND MODERATE SPIRIT. THE PLO SHOULD AT LEAST BE WILLING TO BRING ITS POSITION ISRAEL INTO LINE WITH THAT OF OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS AND TO INDICATE SOME ACCEPTANCE OF UN RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 33. THIS WOULD CREATE A BASIS FOR SOME FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.

3. PRINCE SAUD SAID THE ARAB STATES AND THE PLO WERE FULLY AWARE THAT DESPITE STRONG ISRAELI
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URGINGS WE HAD NOT VETOED THE PLO'S ATTENDANCE AT THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING. ARABS THOUGHT THIS SHOWED THE BEGINNINGS OF A MORE HELPFUL AMERICAN POSITION. BUT THE PRINCE DID NOT THINK THE PLO WOULD MOVE TOWARD ALIGNING ITS POLICIES TOWARD ISRAEL WITH THOSE OF OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS. IF ISRAEL DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE PLO, WHY SHOULD THE PLO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL? THE PLO, AFTER ALL, WAS THE

AGRIEVED PARTY AND IT WAS UP TO ISRAEL TO SHOW FLEXIBILITY SO THAT PEACE EFFORTS DID NOT COME TO A HALT. HE DOUBTED ALSO WHETHER THE UN DEBATE COULD PASS WITHOUT THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE BECOMING DEFINED MORE IN TERMS OF NATIONALITY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY THAN OF REFUGEES OR A PEOPLE. A NATIONAL, POLITICAL IDENTITY WAS, AFTER ALL, NO LESS THE RIGHT OF THE PALESTINIANS THAN OF OTHER NATIONS THAT HAD KNOWN COLONIAL DOMINATION.

4. THE CHARGE COMMENTED THAT MOST OF THE SETBACKS IN THE MODERN HISTORY OF PALESTINIANS WERE CAUSED BY THEIR UNCOMPROMISING INSISTENCE ON WHAT THEY BELIEVED RIGHT TO THE EXCLUSION OF WHAT WAS POSSIBLE. HE URGED THAT THE ARAB STATES AND THE PALESTINIANS NOT CHECK THE HOPEFUL DEVELOPMENTS EVIDENT TODAY MERELY FOR THE APPEARANCE OF A TRIUMPH IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, UNSC RESOLUTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976JIDDA00062
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760002-0778
From: JIDDA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760187/aaaacdzs.tel
Line Count: 134
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2004 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SAUDI FONMIN SAUD COMMENTS ON FORTHCOMING MEETING OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL
TAGS: PFOR, SA, US, UN, PLO, (SAUD BIN FAISAL, PRINCE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006